

**GI in Iraq Wrestles With
Cannon Fodder Role,
Page 3**

**Communist PLP's Answer to
Capitalism's Chamber of
Horrors, page 8**

CHALLENGE

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GENERAL CLARK: WARMAKER LIBERAL STYLE



Just three days into his campaign, a Newsweek poll declared war criminal Wesley Clark the Democrats' front-runner for president in 2004. The media blitz promoting the four-star general's candidacy represents an important step in the liberal U.S. rulers' drive to mobilize society for wars of ever-increasing scope. The U.S. military already faces a troop shortfall in Iraq; invading Iran or North Korea will require hundreds of thousands of soldiers that the Pentagon does not yet have; confronting China, Russia, or an anti-U.S. European coalition in the coming decades will take millions. To help fill that need, Clark 2004 aims to stir up patriotic war fervor in a humanitarian guise.

Clark's run immediately received the blessing of E.J. Dionne, who heads the liberal Brookings Institution's "United We Serve" project. As CHALLENGE has reported, "United We Serve" is part of a major ruling-class effort to channel the surge in public spirit that followed Sept. 11 into a program of universal national service, mainly in the military. Dionne asked a leading question in the Washington Post (9/21/03), "In the wake of 9/11, which 'experience' is more relevant — Clark's in foreign policy and war, Howard Dean's as a chief executive, albeit of a small state, or the extensive legislative experience of most of the rest of the field?"

The liberal media present Clark as a rational, "humane" alternative to the warmongering Bush crowd. But very little separates mass murderer Clark from the current crew of butchers:

he was wounded) and not only supported U.S. imperialist aggression there but said "we" could win that war by going "all out."

- In the 1980s and '90s, Clark was commander of refugee camps in Miami and Fort Allen, Puerto Rico, incarcerating Haitians fleeing the U.S.-backed fascist Duvalier dictatorship and its successor. U.S. government documents obtained by the Haitian Refugee Center revealed that the refugees were packed together under appalling conditions and were sprayed repeatedly and indiscriminately with highly toxic chemicals. Soon male inmates began to develop female breasts and female refugees were subject to a much higher rate of cervical cancer than the rest of the female population. Clark was chief of operations at the U.S. Navy internment camp at Guantanamo, Cuba, in charge of this whole operation.

- Clark became supreme commander of NATO under Clinton. In 1999, when the Serbian dictator Milosevic tried to upset U.S. control of the world's oil trade with his own pipeline deal with the Russians, Clark directed a massive bombing campaign that killed and maimed tens of thousands of civilians. A Spanish pilot, Capt. Martin de la Hoz told the Spanish weekly newspaper "Artículo 20" (6/14/99): "There was a...coded order from the North American military that we should drop anti-personnel bombs over Pristina and Nis. All...missions...were planned in detail, including attacking planes, targets and type of ammunition by U.S. high-rank-

AFL-CIO Patriots Use Immigrants' Fight to Back Rulers' War



LOS ANGELES, Sept. 20 — Hundreds of CHALLENGES and 1,000 PL leaflets were distributed at a rally here while the AFL-CIO was busy building patriotism and giving out mini-U.S. flags to hundreds of its rank-and-file members. After a speaker sang the U.S. national anthem and a small group started chanting "USA, USA, USA!," a CHALLENGE seller said in a loud voice to those nearby, "To hell with 'USA! USA!' Whether we live here or in Mexico, we're nothing but exploited workers! The bosses and their flags have done nothing for us!"

Then workers in the laborers' union asked him for a stack of communist leaflets to take back to their local. They bought his last CHALLENGE. A group of UCLA students also asked for leaflets—which attacked racism and imperialist war and called for communist revolution—to take to their friends.

Some unionists talked to their fellow workers at the march, most of them in unions, linking the cutbacks with the war budget. Their information sheet began, "Uncle Sam has a problem: military recruitment." A woman in the Laborers' union said, "Oh, this is so right. When my son applied for a special loan for school, they told him he had to register for the army to get it!"

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride organizers say its purpose is to fight for immigrant workers' citizenship. The LA rally began with Maria Elena Durazo, sellout leader of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union, calling for a "moment of silence as the colors are raised and our national anthem is sung." She praised the Latino veterans who raised the flag, stressing patriotism and respect for the U.S. military.

Since last year MIWON (Multi-Ethnic Immigrant Workers' Organizing Network) and the AFL-CIO have been organizing for immigrants to receive citizenship and driver's licenses. A local Democratic Party honcho, Gil Cedillo, has been stressing these demands since 1998. The California State Legislature recently passed a bill (SB 60) allowing immigrants with a federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) to apply for driver's licenses. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service requires the payment of taxes on any earnings regardless of immigration status. This makes the TIN a de facto recognition of the presence of large numbers of "illegal" immigrants in the U.S. economy,

EDITORIAL: General Clark: Warmaker Liberal Style

continued from front page

ing military authorities.... They are destroying the country," the F-18 pilot said, "bombing it with...toxic nerve gases, surface mines dropped by parachute, bombs containing uranium, black napalm, sterilization chemicals, sprayings to poison crops and weapons of which even we still know nothing about." While they protected Exxon Mobil and Chevron Texaco, Clark and Clinton claimed to be saving ethnic Albanians. Clark's "humanitarian" high explosives (Weapons of Mass Destruction?) blasted homes, schools, hospitals, trains and busses.

- In that same war, when the Russians landed troops at the Yugoslav airport in Pristina, Clark ordered the commander of British forces to drive the Russians out, causing the British general to reply, "I'm not going to start World War III to satisfy your ego."

- Clark has long-standing ties to the liberal establishment. In February, months before announcing, he

made a pilgrimage to the Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in New York, a leading think-tank, along with Brookings, for U.S. imperialism. In his speech there, Clark told the main rulers what they wanted to hear about using the UN to gain allies for

"... when the Russians landed troops at the Yugoslav airport in Pristina, Clark ordered the commander of British forces to drive the Russians out, causing the British general to reply, "I'm not going to start World War III to satisfy your ego."

U.S. military adventures and covering warfare with the fig leaf of "nation-building." Clark also bragged that he had become a CFR member in 1974 on the recommendation of Nelson Rockefeller himself. From 1975 to 1976, Clark was a White House Fellow under the Ford-Rockefeller regime.

- Since his retirement from the Army in 2000, Clark has kept busy aiding the liberals' agenda of war and fascism. He often appeared on CNN calling for a larger, more deadly U.S.-led force in Iraq. He served on the Markle Foundation's Task Force on National Security in the Information Age. In October 2002, it issued a report calling for massive electronic eavesdropping and data collection to facilitate the jailing of "enemies." The surveillance plan Clark helped create goes even farther than the drastic schemes devised by Admiral Poindexter and Attorney General Ashcroft.

Clark's campaign may or may not succeed. But the remaining candidates are all just as eager to carry the battle flag of U.S. imperialism. Not one serves the interests of the working class.☛

AFL-CIO Patriots Use Immigrants' Fight to Back Rulers' War

continued from front page

forced to contribute their labor power to U.S. bosses for poverty wages. An amendment SB 60 removed a requirement for a high-tech fingerprinting system.

Some politicians say the bill almost declares amnesty for "illegal" immigrants, "covering up terrorists" working in the shadows of California industry. This bill's backers include the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the LAPD and some insurance and auto executives.

The AFL-CIO leadership, a pawn of the liberal ruling class, changed its fierce anti-immigrant position to try to seduce immigrant workers, using citizenship status and driver's licenses. They're helping the rulers' drive to ensure no one in this country is "un-accounted for," as they continue to hunt down Middle Eastern, South Asian and Arab people.

They want to maximize use of racial profiling.

Of course, many honest people want to fight for the rights of immigrants and are attracted to this movement. But the leaders are trying to win immigrant workers to patriotism/nationalism, key components in the growth of fascism. This ideology makes it easier for those in power to use immigrants for war and fascism.

Many students and workers to whom CHALLENGE sellers talked, and who took more leaflets and papers to pass out at their locals and schools, were disgusted by the flags and nationalist/patriotic rhetoric. It's crucial to work with them in this movement, especially in the unions, at school and in the military. They're open to rebelling against the bosses' imperialist wars and fascism and joining PLP.☛

FASCIST ALERT!

JERSEY CITY, Sept. 23 — As the Freedom Rides head into New York City on October 4, a local fascist, Hal Turner, is trying to rally members of the Aryan Nation, Ku Klux Klan and the National Alliance to protest the Ride when it stops at Liberty State Park here on the 3rd. Turner is a racist who broadcasts a shortwave radio show and has been ranting against immigration reform.

In the last few years, racist attacks on immigrants in the New York metro area has increased: In Farmingville, Long Island, day laborers have been terrorized and fire-bombed; racist police terror has murdered Santiago Villanueva and Jose Ives.

Members of Progressive Labor Party will be supporting undocumented workers in these actions but we want workers to realize that workers have no nations. Nations and borders are set up by the bosses to claim exploitation



rights over as many workers as possible.

The international working class must unite to fight back against the rulers of capitalism. And PLP will be there to defend and protect our class against fascists like Turner and his cronies. Our Party has a rich history of fighting against anti-immigrant groups like Voices of Citizens Together in California (see picture)— a history that will surely continue.☛

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WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:

- ☛ PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of capitalism, like wages and divisions of labor.

- ☛ Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

- ☛ Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for

wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

- ☛ Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

- ☛ Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

- ☛ Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

- ☛ Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



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Fighting Racism in Hospital Helps Build PLP

Last month a multi-racial group of union housekeepers marched into the CEO's office of this large East coast teaching hospital demanding the bosses fire a nurse who had publicly humiliated a housekeeper and refused to apologize.

Here's the story: a nursing unit received a lunch of pizzas and sodas as a "prize" from the hospital. The unit clerk invited Ann, the unit housekeeper, to have a slice. As she was leaving the unit's "break" room with her pizza, nurse Jane, a clinical specialist, demanded to know why Ann was in the break room, because "you steal." This confrontation happened in front of patients, co-workers and nursing students. Ann is black, the nurse is white. The latter's comments stunned everyone. Ann has worked at the hospital 28 years and is no thief.

Initially the bosses tried to smother this incident and the racism it represents. When they learned we were organizing, they tried to get the nurse to apologize. She refused.

In the past, PLP'ers would immediately issue a flyer attacking this racism and calling for multi-racial unity and communist revolution. Then, after a big controversy for a few weeks, it would blow over. At times we'd have demonstrations across from the hospital with a handful of the more committed workers. Maybe one or two workers would come closer to PLP and our

CHALLENGE distribution might increase a little.

Our leadership often drew an apology or forced the racist to quit. The mainly black union workers liked our attacks on racism, but continued to see the mainly white nurses and doctors as their "enemy." But the nurses and doctors would view it as an attack on them for being white. The conflict between the mainly white nurses and the mainly black union members remained as bad (or worse) than ever. While the workers stayed divided, the capitalist attacks on patient care continued.

Now we're trying a different approach. What we used to do from the outside we can now do from within the union. The workers recognize us as bona fide union leaders and so do the bosses. We can lead a march through the hospital itself into the bosses' office. We can organize union committees and meetings enabling us to work with more and more workers. We're not marginalized, but mainstream.

A union committee was organized to direct Ann's case. A grievance was filed. The committee participated in, or heard reports from, the many meetings with the hospital bosses. Contingency plans include petitions and a union leaflet. The leaflet, accepted by the union committee, attacked the nurse's elitism and racism because it undermined the unity needed by nurses and union members to fight the

attacks on patient care. The leaflet also linked the U.S. war budget to those attacks.

Before its "official" distribution, some union members saw it and liked it so much they immediately copied and distributed it. The flyers were hung everywhere on the nurse's floor.

The union committee now plans a more general campaign against the divisive environment created by the bosses and their healthcare cuts and will bring this fight into the regular union labor-management meetings. This will help us focus on the bosses' war budget's attacks on patient care.

Our union organizing leads to sharper political struggle with more workers, discussing how racism and equality are the basic issues here. Why does the nurse, with her Masters Degree, refuse to apologize to the black housekeeper even though many think she should? Many believe it's because Jane thinks she's better than Ann.

This leads to more general discussion about how many of the newly-graduated, mainly white nurses don't respect the experience and knowledge of the mainly black support staff; some of whom have



worked there over 20 years. Meanwhile, we are struggling with the nationalist, anti-white feelings of the black workers at the highest level ever.

We also point out how the nurses' capitalist education teaches elitism, racism and sexism. And most importantly it enables PLP'ers to explain that we participate in such fights because capitalism is based on such inequalities and the working class needs the equality of classless communism. One such discussions led to a young worker joining PLP.

We're learning as we proceed. We constantly try to guard against being opportunist, liberal or reformist. Our barometer will be the number of new Party members and new CHALLENGE readers we develop. We'll keep readers informed as this fight continues. ☼

Woman Warns Killer Kops: 'You'll pay for this!'



I attended a demonstration on Sept. 17 during the hearing in Newark, NJ, for the cops who murdered Santiago Villanueva, a Dominican immigrant from Upper Manhattan. When he suffered an epileptic attack while working in a Bloomfield, NJ shop, the cops answering the 911 call saw him suffering the seizures. But instead of helping him, the cops acted in their usual racist manner — allegedly "thinking he was on drugs" — attacked and handcuffed him, causing his death.

The hearing, already postponed from two months before, was a waste

of time since the main judge was absent. The cops asked for another extension. While this was happening, a woman surprised everyone, rising to yell at the cops, "You'll pay for this." The presiding judge threatened the woman with arrest if she did it again.

There was a rally outside where the same woman voiced her anger at the cops, comparing them to Hitler's Nazis. She invited all to return to next month's hearing. Everyone promised to bring more people then.

An Upper Manhattan Worker

GI in Iraq Wrestles With Cannon Fodder Role

This summer a family member was sent to the Middle East, as were many other men and women from working-class families. He's the eldest, and as with many fatherless working-class families, the eldest son carries a father's burden. Needless to say my entire family was crushed by the news that their father-figure would soon be at war for reasons that could not be seriously justified by Bush, Congress or the bosses' puppets in the U.S. media. In one of our last conversations before his deployment he said "Man, I don't want to kill any of those people, and I hope it doesn't come to that." This is a contradiction that family members in the military are forced into by the bosses' capitalist system of deepening perpetual imperialist war.

"This is a working-class man," I said to myself as I thought of my brother at war with my Arab working-class brothers; he will assess this contradiction as a working-class person and come to a working-class conclusion. Several weeks later I heard from him. He was still working through this contradiction. He said he felt like "...a sheep getting herded around the third world." But he was glad to be getting a few days of R&R (Rest & Relaxation) away from his "Bedouin cell." Yet, still no answer to his contradiction.

The next time I heard from him he was much clearer about his feelings that this war is not in his interests. He found that the military's idea of "R&R" for working-class

troops is a "swimming pool in the middle of the desert with the sun beating down on your head." And contrary to the terrorist profile the U.S. media stamps onto Arabs, he found "these people have their own culture, their own world." Finally, realizing he didn't belong on the bosses' side, he said "I don't even know what I'm doing here. I feel like an intruder."

This is where many of the troops are mentally. They're looking for answers to contradictions staring them in the face. It's our responsibility to provide answers to our class brothers and sisters. When we had last gotten together, I had given our brother material on imperialism and inter-imperialist rivalry. This information will be increasingly important to him in the coming months.

I'm writing this with the hope it may inspire readers to initiate this kind of communication with their family members overseas. These are our soldiers, not the bosses'; we must win them to communism and PLP and to refuse racist, destructive and self-destructive orders. Only through communist revolution will these contradictions truly be resolved. Workers, Students, Soldiers, Unite!

I'll keep CHALLENGE readers up-to-date on the progress made by this brother of ours.

A Red Student

Anti-Globalists Don't See Capitalism As Root of Super-exploitation



The Cancun, Mexico, meeting of the World Trade Organization was a failure before it started. "Little or nothing can be done to change subsidies and custom duties," said the World Bank's Uri Dadush, even before the meeting began.

This is the third international gathering of world rulers organized during the Vicente Fox regime. All have failed. This meeting collapsed in a few days once the imperialists of Europe, Japan and the U.S. totally rejected the poorer countries' demand that they

lower subsidies to farmers.

Amid the growing crisis of world capitalism — marked by endless wars and super-exploitation of workers — and intense imperialist competition for markets, resources and labor, very few concessions can be given to the smaller capitalist countries.

In Mexico one million farmworkers lost their jobs when corn was imported. Throughout agriculture, 7 of 10 workers are unemployed, victims of the crisis of overproduction and capitalist competition.

In Mexico, different imperialists are fighting each other to find local investment partners in the energy industry. Local bosses' associations like CONCAMIN and CARMEX and their political allies in Mexico's Congress are divided over privatization. But they're united on super-exploiting the workers. Whether privatized or public, the energy bosses won't serve the needs of the working class (consumers or energy workers). Workers'

needs can only be satisfied by abolishing private property altogether. This fight would put our class on the offensive.

The antiglobalist movements in Brazil, Mexico and worldwide believe hunger and other disasters caused by the profit system can be alleviated without destroying capitalism in all its forms. The globalists John Sellers (Ruckus Society) and Kevin Danaher (Global Exchange) want, "To build a local movement to defend democracy." But this will only perpetuate capitalism and its exploitation. They mislead millions who want to fight for fundamental changes.

Capitalism is the problem; workers must destroy it by taking state power through communist revolution, led by their Party, PLP. That's the only way to end unemployment, exploitation and misery in the cities and the fields. Join PLP.✪

'Third Way' Won't Solve Salvadoran Workers' Problems

San Salvador, El Salvador — "These guys [leaders of the FMLN, former guerrilla movement] from San Salvador think they can get us to do anything they want," said a farmworker about the current 2004 presidential electoral campaign. "We come from a war in which the main thing we cared about was the liberation of the working class from the yoke of capitalism. We knew what our goals were. Today these electoral opportunists want to use us for their personal benefit while we who built the FMLN sometimes don't have enough to eat." (The FMLN in small letters is the current electoral party. In capital letters it stands for the previous armed group.)

On September 19, hundreds of workers organized by the FMLN, in unions and social organizations, marched down the main streets of the capital against the privatization of health services and to support the FMLN candidate for president, Shafick Handal. Many city workers, farmworkers and students honestly believe the FMLN is a good option to resolve workers' problems. But the truth disproves this.

The capitalist system worldwide is bankrupt. The big capitalists must resort to imperialist war, fascism and the super-exploitation of the working class to resolve their crisis. El Salvador isn't isolated from this misery. The FMLN fights to get the crumbs left over by the bosses, but the working class needs the whole pie. As a class, we produce everything and we should receive everything to meet our needs. Even though the FMLN promises to oppose privatization, they also invite European and U.S. capital to invest here, and exploit us. These corporations demand maximum profit and

insist on privatizing or cutting back services, which the FMLN will go along with.

But there are thousands of workers who reject this electoral circus. Some refuse to participate in these marches, even though many see the struggle against privatization as a good one against the capitalist system. Unfortunately, with or without privatization, the workers' services and wages are being cut.

We don't have to accept the "lesser evil." There is another alternative. Not the "third way" that Handal pushes, but true liberation of the working class through communist revolution. The 12-year guerrilla war was only one battle in this long war.

The bosses use elections to fool us, to try to avoid a real workers' revolution. Under the rules of the electoral game, we must kneel before the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund, before the imperialists, whether they're U.S. or European.

PLP's goal is to stoke the fires of workers' anger, not put them out. Our fight within the unions and mass movement is to win the workers to take power through a revolution for communism. Join PLP.✪



Capitalist Politicians Deadly Road for Freedom Riders

QUEENS, NY, Sept. 20 — Today 250 people (mostly Asian and Latin immigrants) marched to build for the Oct. 4 mass rally at Flushing Meadow Park, the final stop of the Freedom Ride for Immigrant Rights. The Freedom Ride organizers expect 100,000 people at that final rally. Obviously there are many workers who want to fight the horrendous racism suffered by immigrants, documented or not. Since 9/11, the harassment of immigrants from the Middle East, South Asia and Latin America has taken a giant step forward.

Most people at today's march and rally were rank-and-file janitors and hotel, restaurant and domestic workers. The event was organized by three unions — SEIU, 32BJ (building workers), HERE (hotel and restaurant workers) and UNITE (garment workers) — as well as a dozen or so community groups. Many of the union organizers were young and politically progressive. One was a former student of a PLP teacher and agreed to speak to the teacher's class about the October 4 rally. The speakers from the community groups — like the Latin American Workers Project and Workers Abaaz, which organizes South Asian domestics — seemed very working class and committed to fighting the terrible conditions their members face daily.

Despite the movement's working-class base, the leadership is committed to a legalistic strategy wedded to the Democratic Party. The AFL-CIO leadership is clearly the main organizing force behind these local actions and the October 4 rally. Brian McLaughlin, the president of the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council and a NYS Assemblyman, was one of the main speakers. The rest

included a Congressman, another assemblyman, and a City Council member, all Democrats. They all boasted of their "struggle" for local laws that would guarantee language access and immigrant confidentiality policies, but said new national laws were also needed.

However, the leadership of the movement has not demanded any specific legislation in Congress for amnesty or family reunification, so it appears doubtful there'll be any legislative victories soon. Instead, the immigrant rights movement will be used by the AFL-CIO as part of its campaign to defeat Bush in 2004 and elect a Democratic Congress. The union officialdom intends to use the growing working-class anger over economic decline and the costs of empire to put the Democrats back in power. Meanwhile, the patriotism of the movement's leadership serves the Pentagon's current plan to recruit more soldiers for the bosses' endless imperialist wars (see CHALLENGE editorial, 10/24).

It's good that we in PLP participate in this movement to bring our communist politics to those wanting to fight racism, and point out that as long as capitalism exists there will be racist/fascist terror, wars and super-exploitation. We must champion the need for class unity of foreign-born and native-born workers, the need to reject capitalist borders — just as capital ignores borders — and embrace labor internationalism. Workers of the world, unite!✪

Environmentalism: A Communist Perspective — Part I



Many people today believe the excuses given by the bosses and their lackeys that environmental problems are due to a combination of overpopulation, technology and limited resources. This idea is nothing new. In the 1790's, political-economist Thomas Malthus concluded that the population was growing faster than the food supply. His solution? Kill off the "extra" people through war and disease. Today, the Earth's six billion people are multiplying faster than ever. Yet it's estimated that under the right system of production and distribution, and with existing technology, California's agricultural production alone could feed the entire planet.

In the past century, capitalism has:

- Intensified global warming and the risk of climate-based disasters. At present rates, global temperatures will rise an average of 4.5°F. in the next century, compared to a rise of only 1.8°F. in the past 10,000 years!

- Recklessly mismanaged food and water resources to produce more profitable (but less healthy) foods for western consumers, leading to widespread man-made famines. The meat and dairy industries alone squander 5,400 gallons of water and 16 lbs. of grain and soy to produce 1 lb. of beef.

- Irresponsibly used up non-renewable resources. Since 1940, North Americans alone have consumed more than all humans in history, leaving behind a trail of un-recycled waste from personal and industrial consumption.

If the bosses continue the exploitation of our labor and environment, the results may be catastrophic. But they hide the truth by telling workers that environmentalism eliminates jobs, by spreading propaganda that pollution is strictly an "individual problem," or by minimizing or denying the impact on the environment. The bosses aim to pit workers against the environment and convince workers to clean up "their" messes.

Though these problems have received much attention since the environmental movements of the 1970's, many of the groups involved lack an analysis of capitalism that would provide people with an understanding of the root cause of envi-

ronmental problems and their connection to socio-economic inequalities. For instance, the various "Green" parties confuse many people. These groups target individual corporations as the cause of environmental disaster, letting capitalism as a system off the hook. Their demands are virtually impossible to achieve because the law of capitalist competition forces every corporation to sacrifice workers and the environment in order to make profit. Their advocacy of environmental and economic reforms spreads the illusion that workers' lives can be fundamentally improved under capitalism.

Then there are the "radical" environmental groups that advance the idea that humans are the problem. They believe there's a contradiction between human need and the environment. They use anarchist "direct-action" techniques to boycott companies and forcibly prevent things like animal testing, logging and deep-sea trawling. But their strategies have had few results beyond raising awareness of the problem. Their solution is a return to primitive, less-intensive, low-tech forms of production. In the name of animal rights and saving the environment, their solution would mean the death of billions of humans due to extremely low productivity.

Communists understand that environmentalism is fundamentally a question of social organization and development. Overpopulation or technology are not the root causes of these problems. Like slave and feudal societies before it, capitalism imposes limits on social development. Capitalists talk only of "sustainable growth" —

meaning a future of endless profits and exploitation. While workers toil to make profits for the ruling class, billions are denied access to the vast array of goods and services they create. Wasteful and profit-driven forms of capitalist production and consumption wreak havoc on the environment under normal conditions, not to mention the severe waste and destruction caused by constant economic crises and imperialist wars. The result is that capitalism causes man-made shortages while destroying our health and environment.

Capitalism is creating a social and environmental nightmare. Only a communist society can take us beyond capitalist limits and avert environmental catastrophe. Communists must think in terms of a sustainable economy, where human need and a healthy environment complement each other. What's good for the environment is good for workers! A rationally-planned economy run by workers and founded on production for human need will bring an end to the inequalities, wastefulness and damage caused by capitalism. If used responsibly, the Earth's resources can sustain communist society on Earth well into the future.

(The remaining three sections of this series will discuss Consumerism, Diet and Energy, with a communist critique of capitalism's toll on workers and their environment and will outline a communist solution to the environmental and social misery inflicted by the bosses.)

Readers Review: 'TWELVE MONTHS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD,' By Larry Lesueur; Borzos, 1943

I found this book interesting and inspiring. On Oct. 12, 1941, American correspondent Larry Lesueur set sail from Scotland for sub-zero Archangel. [This was the port in the Soviet Union, above the Artic Circle, that received supplies for the Soviet war effort. — Editor]

Lesueur said, "The opportunity to see Russia for the last time under Soviet Communism was the greatest adventure that the tottering world had left. No reporter, I felt, could possibly turn it down!"

One of Lesueur's jobs was to broadcast war news from the Soviet Union back to the U.S. In Kuibyshev he met Miss Burrows, an announcer, a gray-haired black woman born in Harlem. She spoke Russian with a decided American accent, and addressed Lesueur as "comrade." Miss Burrows began the broadcast of Soviet war news with the traditional words, "Workers of the world, unite!"

In May of 1942 Lesueur prepared to return to New York. He met a Soviet officer in Moscow and asked him, "What about Stalingrad?" "He looked at me long and proudly: 'Stalingrad will never fall!'" [The Soviet victory over the Nazis at Stalingrad, a five-month battle, was the turning point of the Second World War — Editor]

If you pick up this short (345 pages) well-written book, you won't want to put it down. I didn't!

Oakland Comrade

'THE YEARS OF RICE AND SALT' By Kim Stanley Robinson

A drawback in contemporary literature is its general lack of revolutionary depth. It's refreshing to find a novel that actually has a critique of the oppressive capitalist system and a kind of rewrite of the Communist Manifesto. Kim Stanley Robinson's current novel "The Years Of Rice And Salt," asks

what if the black plague had utterly decimated the population of Europe, and Islam and China were the world's sole dominant civilizations?

The story's leading characters are reincarnated throughout about 1,000 years of history and tell their stories. This hocus pocus was actually pretty well done, but without the materialistic view necessary for a complete understanding of the world

"this book helps to illustrate the failure of imperialism and its offspring of racism, sexism, classism, et al, and at the same time advances Marxist ideology as the solution to these problems."

around us.

I like the way Robinson attacks the Sufis for turning Islam into a vehicle to control the populace. He illustrates how religion was used to galvanize the people to fight wars not beneficial to them. He shows how the sultans and rulers continually warred with each other over land and resources, putting the burden on imperialism as opposed to anti-European nationalism and other racist ideas. Robinson's enemy is imperialism, sexism, racism, slavery and war.

In one chapter, two of the central characters write books. One can best be described as a "Vindication On The Rights Of Woman" and the other a type of Communist Manifesto. Seeing actual Marxist ideology in a mainstream book was both refreshing and alarming. Since the bosses' popularize revolution in order to control it, I become alarmed when I see revolutionary speech in a novel. But after finishing it, I think it's a novel we can read and use to help win others to fight for communism. Since we fight against the same enemies as those in the novel, and he uses a scientific, practical type of centralism as the ultimate model of government, this book could be a great help to our movement.

The novel teaches some of the fundamental belief systems of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism that can help us understand these religions and identify with workers who follow them, enabling us to spread the seeds of communism amongst the fertile soil of the religiously oppressed proletariat.

His line is by no means completely consistent with PLP's. But this book helps to illustrate the failure of imperialism and its offspring of racism, sexism, classism, et al, and at the same time advances Marxist ideology as the solution to these problems. This should give us a firm foundation upon which to build our Party. So if you're looking for an entertaining read that actually attacks the great evil of imperialism, this is the book for you.

Red Reader

\$\$\$ for instruments, pay-cuts for musicians

The gala opening of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra...seemed particularly fitting.... The orchestra...acquired a collection of 30 priceless historic stringed instruments....

The orchestra had plenty to celebrate tonight.... [having] signed a new two-year contract the day before. This...involved a pay cut for the musicians — something that...is likely to figure in the contract negotiations of more and more American orchestras in coming months. (NYT, 9/12)

LETTERS

NYC Union Hack Helps Close School

“We can’t trust the unions any more, honey,” a veteran teacher told me. She’s right. The unions are in cahoots with the bosses. And the working class certainly can’t trust the bosses to take care of us as the rising tide of fascism militarizes this country for war.

This tide is growing in education, as reflected at my high school. The latest attack was the “restructuring” of the school, another word for “closing.” The main high school will be converted into six smaller schools in the same building. This will increase the number of administrators and create a “cleaner bureaucracy,” according to the “positive” spin woven by our union chapter representative. The 6-fold increase of administrators will enable them to more closely monitor what’s taught in the classroom.

The announcement about the closing came in a meeting in the auditorium. Teachers were shocked as we had been told as recently as that very morning that the school “had a chance to remain open,” if we “worked harder to increase the state standardized scores.” The crowd grew angry, since many of our staff already had been “excessed” (read: “laid off”).

One veteran teacher furiously attacked the principal, the superintendent and the education system attempting to remove our jobs. The arrogant superintendent replied, “This is the way it is and I can’t change it.” Feeling the anger, he asked the union chapter leader to help out.

Standing side-by-side with the principal and superintendent, the union leader attacked teachers “who were lazy and didn’t teach” as a major reason for these moves. He was trying to divide us.

Then one worker attacked the union

“representative,” the first of a rising tide of working-class rage vented against the administration. The superintendent mentioned that he had told the principal about the school reconstruction three hours after he’d heard about it. But the principal had informed us that very morning we still had a chance to keep the school open — an outright lie!

We then were told that nobody would lose a job “this year,” unless school registration declined. When we asked what we could do if we can’t get a position in one of the new small schools the answer was, “That’s your prerogative.” In other words, it’s our problem.

The microphone was freely passed between the principal, the superintendent and the union chapter leader, displaying a coziness with each other, on the same side against the workers.

I spoke and used the example of another “reorganized” school. I indicated the school’s staff would now be divided and fractured, and that the expanded administration would use sorely-needed classrooms for office space. The meeting ended shortly afterwards. The general feeling among my co-workers was one of betrayal, that the union wouldn’t help us.

Then in the hall talking to my fellow workers, the union leader attacked me for “making people scared of losing their jobs.” He was trying to cover for each concession made to the bosses. His verbal assault implied he knew much more than he was willing to share with us. The union “leaders” keep the bosses’ secrets from the workers.

I will continue to build ties with the staff, both teaching and janitorial, and will distribute more CHALLENGES to those who are leaning towards PLP, to be able to recruit them. I will also struggle to raise the class-consciousness of the workers, to make clear that this rotten system cannot

“We can’t trust the unions any more, honey,” a veteran teacher told me. She’s right. The unions are in cahoots with the bosses. And the working class certainly can’t trust the bosses to take care of us as the rising tide of fascism militarizes this country for war.

—A comrade in teaching

be reformed — it must be smashed!

A comrade in teaching

Tenants Fight Back Against Bronx Slumlord

Landlords lease space to maximize profits from renters. They service buildings to the degree it’s profitable. If they can get away without paying for services, they will. In my six-story building in the Bronx, NY, the landlord is refusing to fix the broken elevator. Dozens of black, white, Muslim, Albanian, Caribbean, Asian, Latino, Russian and other working-class residents of two neighboring buildings signed a petition for a rent reduction and had a meeting with a woman from a housing non-profit group, to take the landlord to court.

But the elevator was only the tip of the iceberg. The landlord owns six adjacent buildings, including mine, and there are over 1,000 violations. The non-profit group didn’t know exactly how many because the computer records don’t register above 999!

Two of the buildings’ elevators have been broken for months and three residents are in wheelchairs. The landlord has only one super with a staff of three for all six buildings. During the blackout the emergency lights didn’t work. The roof leaks. The trash compactor chute doors are gone. Lights and safety mirrors are missing in the hallway and many apartments need numerous repairs.

Even if we win a rent reduction and repairs are made, under capitalism, we’re still dependant on the landlord for main-

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NEWS LETTERS ANALYSIS

...FROM AROUND THE WORLD

REVIEWS

CHALLENGE

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PAPER

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tenance and services. Substandard housing compels the working class to fight for better living conditions but this is only a short-term solution. The landlord may slack off his obligations again if he can get away with it and he’ll always be profiting from our rents and from building workers’ wages. A long-term solution is communist revolution led by PLP, where workers will rid the world of landlords and establish living conditions, maintenance and building services according to our own needs, not the landlords’ and other bosses.

The fact that a multi-racial, international group of tenants has organized to fight back shows that workers can unite against the bosses. Because of long work and school hours, it wasn’t until I helped collect signatures that I really talked to anyone in my building. Now I plan to sell CHALLENGE and talk with my neighbors about organizing a long-term solution to broken elevators, missing lights and leaky roofs.

Neo

Leni Riefenstahl, Art for the Führer’s Sake



The German moviemaker Leni Riefenstahl, who made films that glorified Nazism, died this month at 101. Some bourgeois critics praised her work as high art, trying to distinguish it from her fascist politics. But for communists, the issue isn’t whether to deny or dispute anyone’s talent but in each instance to resolve what’s primary. Of course talented people like Riefenstahl can have fascist politics. It doesn’t negate their talent, but it shouldn’t elevate that talent to an artificial equality with the political ramifications of their work. What’s primary about the movies “Triumph of the Will” and “Olympia” is not their cinematic artistry but the fact that they were clearly Nazi propaganda films, just as what’s primary

about “Potemkin” is not the Soviet director Eisenstein’s brilliant film-making but the fact that he used his brilliance to serve the revolution.

Actually, the one inspiring thing is that Riefenstahl never managed to live down her Nazi connections; the almost 60 years she spent saying she was “just an artist” didn’t really convince anyone. Even though she mounted a career as a still photographer, she was never able to work in film again. And even her still photography depicted the same sort of fascist glorification of certain types of physiques — in photos of people in the Sudan — as she exhibited in “Olympia.” In the U.S., D. W. Griffith, despite using many innovative techniques, never lived down the blatant pro-KKK bigotry of his movie “Birth of a Nation,” and his “reply” film “Intolerance” never obliterated the taint of racism.

A couple of years ago, PLPers in LA joined others to protest the presenting of a special Oscar to Elia Kazan. He never totally lived down naming names to McCarthy, even though “On the Waterfront” is accepted as a great film (it conveniently glorifies Marlon Brando’s character for naming names, albeit naming criminals to the police). The point is that Riefenstahl, Griffith, Kazan and others like them always had — and under capitalism will have — followers willing to make a rather artificial separation

between art and politics, and between art and the artist, and who will acknowledge their artistic accomplishments and political failings at the same time.

We can’t fall into that trap. A good line in a bad movie once said that what defines who we are is not our abilities, but our choices. These people chose to use their talent to serve fascists. That must be condemned, and condemned as primary over whatever talent they may have had. It might become a little more problematic with artists whose work didn’t have a blatantly political message but who had reactionary personal lives, like Salvador Dali, who had close relations with Spain’s fascist Franco.

But when intellectuals under capitalism decide to put their ability and training at the service of reactionary and oppressive ideas, the artificial separation of art and artist becomes nothing more than a rationalization for selling out. Riefenstahl was a pig, and we need to point that out consistently. With people trained in bourgeois intellectualism, that precise wording might not win them over, but that’s the essence of it. Riefenstahl shilled for the Nazis, and even if she did it well, ultimately that’s what counts (and, in one sense, makes it even worse). Her lame excuses, and her movies, could never — and hopefully will never — obscure that.

A Moviegoer

Strategy for GI’s

CHALLENGE correctly predicted the war in Iraq and that the bosses’ drive for control of Middle East oil is the underlying cause of the war. Recent articles have pointed out some tactical differences between Bushite neo-conservatives and Eastern Establishment bosses, while at the same time emphasizing that all these bosses support U.S. power and control in the Middle East.

CHALLENGE has clearly distinguished our Party’s communist line from the various revisionist-nationalist positions of other “left” groups. Rather than pandering to the military (“we support the troops”) or writing off all GIs as hopelessly reactionary, our paper tries to win soldiers and sailors to an anti-racist, anti-imperialist and ultimately communist outlook. Recent articles include racism in the military, organizing in the army, and increasing dissatisfaction with the extended deployments in Iraq.

But I wonder if we’re not missing an opportunity to advance a communist position on the Iraq war and other imperialist adventures. During the Vietnam War, PLP distributed a pamphlet entitled, “Turn the Guns Around.” That slogan may not have been the clearest (it could mean shoot yourself in the foot so you’ll be sent home).

continued on next page

MORE LETTERS

But the basic idea was a sharp expression of communist politics. That is, the most politically advanced and concrete expression of opposition to imperialist war is for soldiers to organize, turn their guns on their officers and link up with communist-led workers engaged in strikes and insurrections. This isn't an idle fantasy. It happened during the Russian Revolution. I don't think we've emphasized this enough in our headlines, articles and pamphlets around Iraq.

"Turn the Guns on Senior Officers" is one suggestion. (Maybe we should cut junior officers, e.g., those coming out of ROTC, some slack. Maybe.) Other slogans could include "Revolutionary [Communist] Mutiny" or "[Communist] Fraternization With the Enemy." Whatever the wording, we want to distinguish ourselves from the liberal-revisionist position of "Bring the Boys Home." Some version of the old "Turn the Guns Around" makes that distinction and points toward the vital role that soldiers and sailors will play in communist revolution.

Red Vet

How Can We Practice Communism under Capitalism?

Recently my wife and I were talking with friends whom we'd known for nearly 20 years. I'm retired, my wife and friend are laid off and my friend's wife is still working. She said, "We're all going to have to be more collective in these hard times." I asked, "How would we do that?" She replied, "We recently took in my brother and sister when they were unemployed and didn't have a place to stay. We tried to share the house, meals and space. But it's hard."

I remembered 25 years ago, I lived in a cooperative union housing development in San Francisco) established in the early 1960s by the ILWU (Intern'l Longshoreman and Warehouse Union) and HUD (U.S. Housing and Urban Development). It was moderate income and, multi-racial. Most members took a progressive, somewhat collective outlook on child care, education and other community problems. You could only accrue \$1,000 in equity each year on your apartment. Unfortunately, after I moved members voted to take the equity off.

Money is another problem under capitalism. Several of us in PLP were discussing retirement. When I said, "I put my company retirement into an IRA" it provoked many questions and some sharp comments. Recently, like many workers, I had to dip into my savings.

You wish to be communists, but the reality is we live under capitalism. So what do you do? It would be good to hear from other CHALLENGE readers on this.

Keep up the good work in CHALLENGE-DESAFIO.

A West Coast comrade

Red Leadership in Mass Organizations

An earlier article on South Africa saying the anti-Apartheid struggle was "co-opted by black rulers" missed the point. It overlooked the fact that the African National Congress (ANC) was a bourgeois nationalist umbrella organization, including the South African Communist Party as a leading and active member. The valiant struggle put black capitalists in power while allowing capitalism to resume its exploita-

tion without the problem of international sanctions, and leaving black workers in misery. This same umbrella coalition approach also preserved capitalism in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Does anyone know of literature showing what it was like for communists working in those or other umbrella groups? What pressures did other members of the umbrella groups exert? Did the Soviet Union actively discourage communists from pursuing a revolutionary line, or was it more a lack of revolutionary perspective? Did Communists worry about being overwhelmed in these movements but were unable to prevent it?

This could be useful since we're trying to do revolutionary work in mass organizations whose perspectives are fixing or reforming capitalism. Obviously, some things have changed. There's no longer a Soviet Union facing Western capitalists. And the Party is not a partner in the mass organization, though we are trying to exert leadership in various caucuses and even establish branches of mass organizations. Some historical guidance, either positive or negative, would be useful.

West Coast Comrade

State Hospital Sickens Workers

I work in a New York State hospital, where new buildings are being erected with new offices, new security systems and more sophisticated computers; with loads of money being paid to contractors.

Meanwhile, workers' salaries are ridiculously low; retirees' jobs are not replaced; the bosses don't replace workers on vacations or taking sick days, forcing others to work twice as hard; and now you must pay more for doctor visits.

A cleaning worker with eight years experience earns \$23,000 a year; a supervisor in the same area gets \$34,000; a departmental head, \$60,000; and the president is paid more than the rest combined. The bosses get the most money and do the least. (That's how capitalism works.) In this hospital students perform dangerous experiments in the labs, some even risking death. Last December, a lab worker took his own life, jumping from the eighth floor. A co-worker said, "Who can take these low wages, lousy treatment, and many demands made on us? This is no life..." Our biggest problem is job cuts, putting more pressure on those remaining.

In the end, the bosses have nothing good to offer workers, only war and misery. The military gets tens of billions while health, education and housing are reduced to rubble. But workers have a different plan. We're bringing communist ideas to workers, discussing war, imperialism and fascism. We're increasing the number of CHALLENGE readers and will struggle ceaselessly to organize a system where workers can live without exploitation or oppression. Capitalism and all its lackeys must be destroyed.

A Brooklyn comrade

CHALLENGE As An Organizer

When I was a union leader in Latin America, my union received CHALLENGE regularly. It was a bit difficult for me to understand how a communist party inside an imperialist country could have such organized ideas. I liked the ideas of one party, one class, one flag, proletarian internationalism and the direct struggle for

communism, although this last idea wasn't as clear to me. I contacted Party members which increased my knowledge of the political line.

If it wasn't for CHALLENGE I would have never met the Party and these ideas. Today I'm an active member and struggle every day to organize more workers around our ideas. In my case CHALLENGE was a political organizer. I know there are many other workers who are tired of this miserable system of misery and would welcome PLP's revolutionary ideas.

A while ago we talked to a worker who we met at a march. He barely knew how to read or write. When he joined our study group and didn't understand many things — like the Russian or Chinese Revolutions, he would study these events five and ten hours a week. One day we attended a PLP training school and this worker was making the main report. Other workers asked him which university he had attended and he replied, "The PLP university"; "everything I know, I learned in the Party." Nowadays he's an outstanding leader, loved by his co-workers, an organizer for communist ideas.

CHALLENGE is a paper that teaches revolutionary, political ideas, analyzing the past and present with the goal of advancing to a communist future. In our study groups and discussions we must help each other in the readings of dialectics and politics to advance understanding of our ideas.

A comrade

Bosses Closing Hospitals While Casualties Soar

I was invited to testify for some veterans' groups at a New York City Council hearing to prevent the closings of veterans' hospitals here and around the state. This would dump all their patients into an already overcrowded Brooklyn facility.

Although I had protested outside City Hall many times, I had never been inside. I arrived early to get through any "terrorist" red tape. I was escorted up an opulent circular marble staircase past aristocrat-like statues and furniture placed on a plush red velvet carpet leading to the Council chambers. Its ornate dome made the room look like a palace.

As the first called to testify, I said veterans' hospitals should be expanded, not closed. NYC supplies the largest percentage of GI's in Iraq, suffering the greatest number of casualties, which the government has grossly under-reported. I said we should focus on the real reasons for the war. I quoted a soldier in Iraq who declared, "There is no reason for us to be out here! We're protecting the oil is all, and as for the war supposedly ending, it hasn't." I suggested that one sure way to protect veterans' health was to bring the troops home now, fight for jobs and against the closings of veterans' hospitals.

Another veteran said that although they were 9% of the U.S. population, they comprised 35% of the homeless, attesting to the lack of care for the emotional wounds of their war trauma. He predicted many veterans' deaths if the hospitals close. The wait for a doctor's appointment is now six months or more. There's an even longer wait, overcrowding and inaccessibility for disabled veterans who now would be forced to travel long distances, discouraging them from seeking help and increasing their depression.

A member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War recited a chant they use when marching against the war: "If they tell you to go, there's something you should know; they wave the flag when you attack; when

you come home they turn their back." He said, "It is hypocrisy to wave yellow ribbons and say you 'support the troops' and then close hospitals that the wounded and disabled would need. They did it to the atomic vets after World War II [those ordered into the A-Bomb testing area as an "experiment" - Editor]. They did it to Vietnam veterans sick from Agent Orange/dioxin. They did it to the veterans of the 1991 war with Gulf War Syndrome." He asked, "Will they be able to do it again?"

As I was leaving the hearing it suddenly hit me that the place looked just like the Winter Palace I had seen in the movies about the Russian Revolution. I started to envision thousands of unemployed, veterans, immigrants and city workers charging up the marble stairs and smashing all those symbols of this bloody capitalist system.

Korean War vet

Win Immigrants to Communism

The CHALLENGE editorial (9/24) on the "Freedom Ride for Immigrants" unmasks the warmaking and fascist plans of the bosses and their lackeys. But it omits PLP's experiences in the last 30 years of giving political leadership to the immigrant section of the working class in the shops and the fields. Every Party effort in spreading communist politics among immigrants has been supported by these workers. The editorial didn't show the Party's potential for giving communist leadership to these mass movements promoted by the bosses. Nor does it take into account the views of workers involved in them or present a plan for the latter's political advancement.

Immigrant workers are attracted to the Freedom Ride and other similar events built by the politicians because of their desperation and vulnerability. But our practice has shown that these workers are winnable to our ideas. To win them we need many ingredients. An analysis of the situation is necessary but not sufficient; we need to take their conditions and struggles seriously, so they can take our communist politics seriously. Despite any disagreement with our ideas, through a process of developing close ties with them, sooner rather than later they will seek our leadership and our Party. This is my experience in many years as a communist organizer in the labor movement.

Where will the millions of workers that will join the Party come from? Mainly from the mass organizations and movements manipulated by the bosses and their politicians. The bosses' ability to impose their politics is partly because we don't make enough of an effort to win the masses to our ideas - underestimating the workers' potential and overestimating the influence of the sellouts. If we try and fail to stop the bosses' plan, at least we'll win many workers to the party.

If the bosses' plan is to win immigrant workers to become cannon fodder, this gives us an opportunity to win more soldiers to communism. Day after day immigrants die, victims of unemployment, racism and the Immigration Service. According to official figures, 430 immigrant workers die each year, more than have died in Iraq so far. What have we done to build a movement against these murders?

The Freedom Ride can be transformed into a movement against this racist genocide and against imperialist war. The goal of this letter is to encourage those comrades in the Party who are seriously trying to give leadership with our communist ideas inside the mass movement led by the capitalists.

An immigrant worker

Communist PLP's Answer To Capitalism's Chamber of Horrors

The Progressive Labor Party believes that communist revolution offers the only answer to the terrible problems confronting billions of workers around the world. In 2003, these problems include:

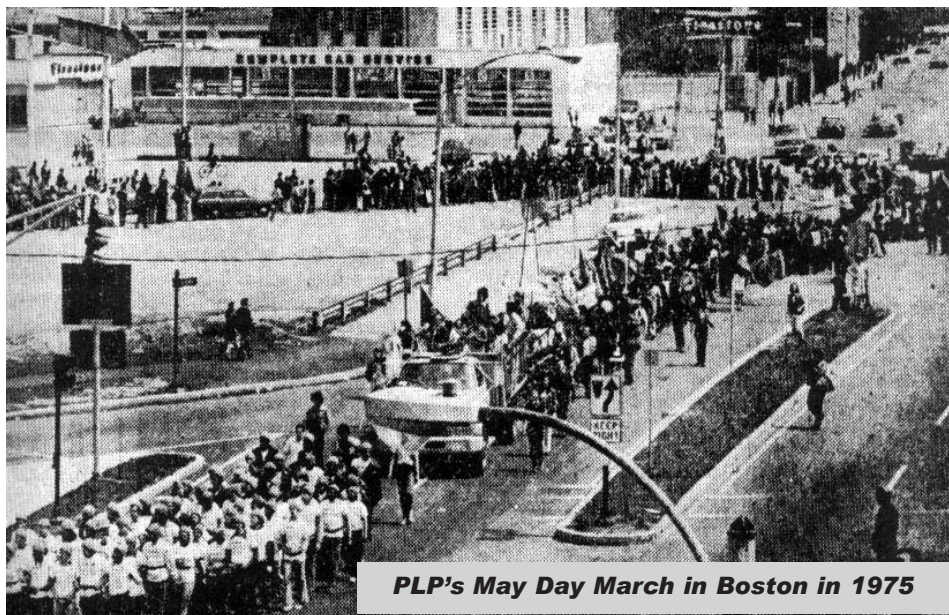
- Grinding poverty, which forces nearly half the planet's population to live on the equivalent of \$1-\$2 a day;
- Wars for profit and world domination, which turn working-class youth into cannon fodder for the greedy rulers;
- Mass unemployment, which the rulers use cynically to discipline workers and hold down wages;
- Police-state terror, whose primary purpose is to prevent workers from organizing to fight in our class interests;
- Racism, which doubly impoverishes non-white workers with twice the jobless and poverty rates of white workers, thereby lowering conditions for ALL workers, and in the U.S. keeps over two million people in jail (the highest in the world), 2/3 of them black and Latin males.
- The special oppression and degradation of women, which, along with racism, the bosses need to super-exploit our class and keep us divided;
- A "me-first" culture of selfishness and cynicism, which misleads us into believing the lie that since things will never change, our best bet is the callous scramble for individual success.

Of all these abominations, the last is the worst. **The profit system's ideology keeps us imprisoned in this society's chamber of horrors.** Only by learning to reject capitalist ideas, capitalist values and capitalist philosophy can we throw the capitalist monkey off our collective backs. History shows that sooner or later, people rebel against poverty, terror and degradation. But if the rebellion doesn't take a road leading to fundamental change, then even the broadest, most militant mass movements are doomed to fail.

Only communism can bring fundamental change. Only the working class, spearheaded by industrial workers and soldiers, has the potential to make this change by carrying out revolution and seizing state power. But the working class won't organize itself spontaneously. A unique political party, a communist party, is required to lead this process.

The Progressive Labor Party exists for this reason. In our 40-year history, we have led many struggles, made many mistakes, learned a lot and witnessed the gravest defeat the international working class has ever suffered. **The collapse of the old communist movement has left the world's workers temporarily without a center and a magnet.** The retreat to "free-market" capitalism in once-socialist China and the former Soviet Union has given U.S. imperialism a blank check to do its dirty work. The mayhem Bush & Co. are spreading in Iraq and Afghanistan and Clinton's 1999 aerial war of terror in the former Yugoslavia serve as sorry examples.

But cynicism and despair aren't the answer. Nor must we fall for the deadly illusion that a "lesser evil" politician can bring us anything but more of the same. The alternative to Bush isn't Howard Dean, Gen. Wesley Clark or any other "white



PLP's May Day March in Boston in 1975

knight" the bosses try to pass off as the savior of the moment.

The alternative to Bush and the system he represents is communism, a qualitatively different system. To bring it about, the Progressive Labor Party is trying to become a qualitatively different party.

We are a Party of the working class. We consider ourselves Marxist-Leninists. Marxism is a living science. The defeats of the past were due to serious errors committed by the once-great Communist Parties of the former Soviet Union, China, and other countries. We criticize these errors and strive to learn from them. We live under a dictatorship of the bosses. Following Marx, Lenin, and other giants of the world communist movement, we continue to endorse the concept in which the working class rules, The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, creating a society in which production serves the needs of all workers instead of the profits of a few bosses. This remains our long-range goal.

Our outlook is international. We believe in the idea of "one class, one goal, one flag, one Party."

We aren't a debating society. Learning to make revolution and to seize state power requires constant practice. In politics, class struggle is the main form of practice. As we engage in all kinds of struggle, big and small, we analyze our activity and

attempt to identify our errors so that we can avoid repeating them and strengthen ourselves collectively in the process. Our measure of success in all our events and actions remains the growth of our Party through recruitment and the spreading of its ideas, primarily through the circulation of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO.

Making revolution requires winning hundreds of millions of workers to fight for it. This process in turn demands that our Party develop deep, solid personal-political relationships with workers and others. In 1968, we adopted a policy of "Building a Base in the Working Class." That policy is as valid today as it was then.

Building the Party, correcting errors and winning workers require a collective approach. This society tries to overwhelm us with individualism and to drown us in subjectivity. A PLP leader remarked years ago: "If you could bottle and sell subjectivity, we'd all be billionaires." Only communist collectivity, called "Democratic Centralism," and the communist method of criticism/self-criticism can help move us beyond bourgeois navel-contemplating. We have to learn to view the Party as the main thing in our lives and the working class's needs as paramount over our personal needs and desires. This isn't easy, to say the least. Capitalist thinking remains programmed into us 24/7. Only the Party

can lead us over a very long time to make the necessary changes in our outlook.

The working class needs a Party, and its Party needs leaders. Communist leadership must be tested, committed and capable. It must be humble and approachable in dealing with Party comrades and workers. It must also be ruthless and shrewd in dealing with the class enemy and any threat to the Party from without or within. We are developing such a cadre of leadership. We still have a long way to go.

Finally, **revolution requires a long-range outlook.** A year, a decade, or even an individual lifetime doesn't provide an accurate gauge of strategic victory in the class struggle. We are dealing with the strongest, most murderous ruling class in history. Our class has sustained a severe body blow. Class consciousness remains at a low level. The bosses appear able to inflict harm at will. Yet we must not view things statically. We must not fix on things as they are at the present moment. The specter of communism continues to haunt the rulers. The lull in strikes, class struggle and rebellion is temporary. The self-defeating poisons of nationalism and religion will not mislead workers forever. Our Party and its ideas can provide the antidote.

We have a job to do: to bring revolutionary class consciousness into the mass movements and win political leadership of workers and others.

In February and March of 2003, before and during Bush & Co.'s invasion of Iraq, millions upon millions of workers and others mobilized on every continent for the largest single-event demonstrations in history. They were protesting against a particular imperialist war. However unclearly, they were also seeking an alternative to imperialist war in general. Without knowing it yet, these millions, along with millions more not yet in motion, are victims of capitalism in search of a communist party. We can and will learn to make the PLP the beacon that guides them in the historic struggle to destroy this obscene system. ☸

THE FOOLISH OLD MAN WHO REMOVED THE MOUNTAINS

In June 1945, Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, told the following fable at the end of a party congress. It still holds value for revolutionaries and workers today.

An old man lived in northern China long ago and was known as the Foolish Old Man of North Mountain. His house faced south and beyond his doorway stood the two great peaks, Taihang and Wanwu, obstructing the way. He called his sons, and hoe in hand they began to dig up these mountains with great determination. Another greybeard, known as the Wise Old Man, saw them and said derisively, "How silly of you to do this! It is quite impossible for you few to dig up these two huge mountains." The Foolish Old Man replied, "When I die, my sons will carry on; when they die, there will be my grandsons, and then their sons and grandsons, and so on to infinity. High as they are, the mountains cannot grow any higher and with every bit we dig, they will be that much lower. Why can't we clear them away?" Having refuted the Wise Old Man's wrong view, he went on digging every day, unshaken in his conviction. God was moved by this, and he sent down two angels, who carried the mountains away on their backs.



Today, two big mountains lie like a dead weight on the Chinese people. One is imperialism, the other is feudalism. The Chinese Communist Party has long made up its mind to dig them up. We must persevere and work unceasingly, and we, too, will touch God's heart. Our God is none other than the masses of the Chinese people. If they stand up and dig together with us, why can't these two mountains be cleared away? ☸